

Joanna Hernik, Antonio Minguez Vera: Gender equality in parliaments - where do we stand in Europe? Considerations from the economic development and society's masculinity index point of view

Joanna Hernik
West Pomeranian
University of Technology in Szczecin
Faculty of Economics
Zolnierska street 47,
72-210 Szczecin, Poland
jhernik@zut.edu.pl
Phone: +48914496900

Antonio Minguez Vera
University of Murcia
Faculty of Economics and Business
Campus de Espinardo, s/n, Edificio 2,
30100 Murcia, Spain
minver@um.es
Phone: +34868888477

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GENDER EQUALITY IN PARLIAMENTS - WHERE DO WE STAND IN EUROPE? CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIETY'S MASCULINITY INDEX POINT OF VIEW

ABSTRACT

It is often emphasized in literature that women constitute half of all societies, but their needs and rights are not reflected in social decisions. The UN and other international institutions aim at changing the position of women in the world, which was reflected in the so called Millennium Development Goals, and currently in the Sustainable Development Goals, one of the latter being promoting gender equality and empowering women. Authors of gender and development literature often write about women as an untapped factor of economic growth. In this paper, we want to reverse the point of view and look at women whose activity is conditioned by the economic development of the country. Therefore, this article presents a certain diagnosis of the current state, but on the other hand, it looks for an explanation of some dependencies.

Today, the reasons for women's presence or absence in politics are unclear; therefore, we want to inspect the basic determinants, which, in our opinion, are the wealth of the society and its character (masculinity vs. femininity). Consequently, the aim of the following article is to determine women's participation in European parliaments and to verify the hypothesis that the presence of women in European parliaments is directly proportional to the economic development, measured by GDP per capita. Apart from the main hypothesis, the auxiliary one regarding the masculinity of society is also examined (Hofstede model).

The conducted analysis allows us to conclude that the participation of women in European parliaments remains low and it is on average 28.04%, and no European country reached 50%. The calculations confirmed the statistical significance of both hypotheses, so we can say that the presence of women in European parliaments depends on the economic development of a given country and the type of society. These determinants are difficult to change, which is why Europe is facing further challenges. It is obvious that changes occur relatively slowly (although the upward trend is visible) and have their causes. Our analyses show that the main ones include the level of economic development and the nature of society. No relationship was found between the number of women in parliaments and other economic factors, such as unemployment.

Keywords: Europe, economic development, gender equality, Hofstede index, parliamentary elections, Sustainable Development Goals

1. Introduction

Despite the fact that the awareness of the role of women in politics and the complexity of this issue have been growing recently, there are still few studies proving specific dependencies. Furthermore, there are no works covering Europe as a whole (i.e. 51 countries and disputed territories). Therefore, this article provides novel insights into the debate on women in politics by combining two elements: economic development and masculinity index of societies.

In 2019, Europe celebrated the centenary of women's rights in politics. However, women's participation in political and social life remains an ongoing issue. In most countries, women are underrepresented in the political arena and face difficulties in obtaining public positions. The gender equality index elaborated by the European Institute for Gender Equality in order to measure the differences between genders over time shows that although "power" is an area where the most progress has been made in the recent years, it is also an area in which the gender gap remains the largest¹. This issue is tackled by various organizations, such as the UN. In September 2000, world leaders met in the UN headquarters in New York to adopt the United Nations Millennium Project. It was decided that by 2015, eight Millennium Development Goals should have been reached. These were: to eradicate extreme hunger and poverty; to achieve universal primary education; to promote gender equality and empower women; to reduce child mortality; to improve maternal health; to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; to ensure environmental stability, and to create a global partnership for development². The issues concerning women and their rights had already been debated in an international forum, for example at the UN General Assembly in December 1952, when the Convention on the Political Rights of Women was approved.

As the development paradigm began to change course towards sustainability (Frajman-Jakšić et al., 2010), Sustainable Development Goals were adopted in January 2016, covering as many as 17 areas³, among them: no poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, decent work and economic growth, and gender equality. The aforementioned Development Goals are the continuation of the Millennium Development Goals and they should be reached by 2030, thus the work on

the position of women in economy and politics will be continued.

The data and analyses presented in the Millennium Development Goals Report 2015⁴ prove that owing to targeted interventions, sensible strategies, sufficient resources, and political will, even the poorest countries can make great progress. For instance, the number of school-age children who could not go to school dropped by almost half worldwide – from 100 million in 2000 to about 57 million in 2015. Despite successes, it turns out that goal #3 (Promoting gender equality and empowering women) is difficult to achieve. That is because women are still facing discrimination in access to economic assets or in the area of public decision making (Braunstein, 2008). Moreover, women live in poverty more often than men do⁵, which stems from the fact that women are still at a disadvantage in the labour market compared to men. On a global scale, about 75% of men of working age have employment, compared to only 50% of women. What is more, on average, women earn 24% less than men⁶ (Booth et al., 2003; Gherghina, 2015). In many countries, women with the same education as men have higher unemployment rates and therefore find it more difficult to access job offers. On the other hand, women live longer and should gain more authority and reputation (Hinek et al., 2019). Thus, despite evident progress in achieving the Millennium Goals, the area of gender equality still requires attention and work, especially in terms of enabling women to make independent decisions in private and public life.

The arguments for gender balance in economy and politics are numerous and show that women can positively influence politics and societies themselves. Therefore, for example, the EU has committed itself to achieving gender balance in political representation and participation in justice, equality and democracy. Member States have been given specific recommendations on how to achieve this objective, including actions that the EU institutions, national governments, political parties, civil society, and the media can take. Today, the European Union comprises 28 countries, but outside the EU, there are 22 other European countries that are also undertaking similar initiatives. Therefore, the aim of this article is to determine the degree of women's participation in European parliaments, which will show the implementation of one of the main Millennium Goals. Our research included all

countries and territories (including disputed ones) of Europe.

Today we can observe the shortage of women in public life, and, on the other hand, the need to obtain a certain critical mass that determines whether the voice of women in parliaments and politics will matter (Wängnerud, 2009; Krook, 2015). It is the analysis of this critical mass that is the keynote in this article. As Dingler et al. (2019) say, women in parliaments change the policy, and thus the future of a given society. For example, feminist issues are more often brought to the fore, as well as childcare, access to employment and equal pay, participation of women legislators in selected assemblies, balanced private and professional life, holidays, social security, and so on. This seems to be an important issue, and that is why it is raised in many national forums, as well as included in the mentioned Millennium and Sustainable Development Goals. These are the reasons for addressing this topic in our article.

As today the reasons for women's presence or absence in politics are unclear, we want to examine the basic determinants, which, in our opinion, are the wealth of the society and its character. Despite the fact that the awareness of the role of women in politics and the complexity of this problem have been growing recently (Krook, 2015; Coller et al., 2018), there are still few studies proving specific dependencies. Furthermore, there are no works covering Europe as a whole. Therefore, in these two aspects we see the value of this work.

2. Literature review

2.1 Participation of women in parliaments

Views on the existing division of power and opinions as to whether there should be more women in decision-making positions are very diverse and conditioned by many factors, including gender. According to Felger and others (2017), the arguments for making more women present in politics can be divided into six groups: 1) justice argument, according to which women constitute about half of the population, and therefore have the right to be represented as such; 2) experience argument – because women's experiences differ from men's experiences, hence they should be represented in discussions leading to the creation and implementation of policies; 3) interest argument, stating that the interests of men and women are often different and even

contradictory, and therefore women are needed in representative institutions to express the interests of their group; 4) the critical mass argument, stating that in order for the role of women to be noticed, their presence must reach a certain critical mass; 5) symbolic argument: women are attracted to political life if they have the right role models; 6) democracy argument that equal representation of women and men strengthens the democratization of governance both in countries undergoing political changes and in well-established democracies⁷. Gender researchers have repeatedly pointed out that the decisions of women's representatives to provide public goods are different than those of men, and that women's decisions are more likely to address issues that are of importance to voters (Ka-beer, Natali, 2013; Coka et al., 2017).

Research of Henderson and Jeydel (2014) show that women reach political positions in four ways:

- 1) Political family – women on this path come from families with long histories of political engagement.
- 2) Substitution – women who take over positions, often temporarily, after their recently deceased fathers, husbands, or brothers.
- 3) Party member – women start at the bottom of the political ladder and work their way up, performing necessary functions to show their loyalty and usefulness to the party.
- 4) Political outsider – women usually lack political experience, but they keep up with new political changes and are an alternative to the status quo.

L. Wängnerud (2009), who focuses on women in parliaments in established democracies, writes that nowadays there is a global quota trend. This is due to the fact that equal voting rights are not strong enough to guarantee participation of women in parliaments, and there must also be direct equality among those elected to office. Currently, the threshold for the representation of women or men in any decision-making body in public and political life in the European Union is set at 40%⁸. In other European countries, those decisions are the responsibility of parliaments, which can adopt legislation and establish institutions to monitor the situation of women (Elomäki, 2015; Sophia, 2016). Some countries, such as Slovenia and France, made

significant progress, but the fact that the results of other countries have worsened shows that the increase in women's political representation is not necessarily permanent and obvious.

It would seem that the model for other European parliaments should be the EU Parliament – however, here, too, there are fewer women than men: only 35.8%⁹ (Macedo, Santos, 2013). Although admittedly in Europe much has been achieved in this respect, taking Finland as an example, where already in 1906 Finnish women were the first to gain the privilege to vote, and the first women in the world with the right to stand for election to parliament in full terms (Franceschet et al., 2019).

Nonetheless, it should be noted that there are two types of representation to be achieved through gender equality: descriptive and substantive¹⁰. According to descriptive representation, the aim is to achieve the required number of women in political leadership, and the presence of women in politics is important in itself because it gives legitimacy to the governing institutions. On the other hand, substantive representation analyses the results that may be achieved owing to a better representation of women and emphasizes that women's participation increases the probability that both the interests of women will be appropriately represented and the governing institutions will work more effectively thanks to distinctive women and their styles of governance. However, as has been mentioned, one hundred years after the suffragettes' protests, gender equality in politics has still not been achieved (Galligan, Coleman, n.d.).

2.2 Women vs. political system of the state

Today there is a wealth of literature on gender relations and democratic consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe, discussing the ways in which gender inequalities have been built and later overcome (Hughes and Paxton 2008; Rueschemeyer and Wolchik, 2009; Kubbe, 2018; Chiva 2018). Undoubtedly, changes have been observed throughout Europe in recent years, as according to Chiva (2005, 2018), after the first election after the fall of socialism, the participation of women in the lower legislative chambers of post-communist countries ranged from 4.6% in Romania to 10% in the Czech Republic and 15% in Latvia. Currently (2019), it is 18% in Romania, 18.9% in the Czech Republic, and 30% in the unicameral parliament of Latvia. Initially, research would explain the absence of women in politics as

stemming from the lack of political ambitions in women. However, it is now recognized that other, more complex structural and social barriers make it difficult for women to fulfil their electoral mandates or to gain access to managerial positions (Austen, Mavisakalyan, 2016). There are also more specific obstacles for various groups of women based on their age, social class, ethnicity, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. S. Austen and A. Mavisakalyan (2016) argue that women's representation in parliament is higher in countries whose constitutions protect the citizens against discrimination based on gender, i.e. in countries where the prohibition of discrimination is enshrined in the highest legal act. Thus, the presence of women in politics, as well as in the economy, is not only a result of ambition or lack thereof, but also of the adopted political solutions (Beaurain, Masclet, 2016).

2.3 Women vs. socio-economic development

It should also be noted that there is a strong correlation between women and socio-economic development, as discussed by Jütting (2006) and Simsek (2014). They emphasize that on the one hand, women can stimulate economic development, and on the other hand – the socio-economic status of women depends on a given economy's level of development. In other words, the relation between women and development is directly proportional and reflexive, because for example increased employment of women can increase the average level of income in society. The economic role of women naturally depends on other conditions, such as the family model and family code, a woman's physical independence, civil liberties, as well as property rights (Beugelsdijk et al., 2017; Ndinda, Ndhlovu, 2018; Arif, 2019).

The gender and economic development literature highlights a correlation of different factors that constrain women's representation in politics. Spark et al. (2019) say that without a doubt, women lack sufficient financial resources to compete with men, which is connected to family wealth and education possibilities. Institutional barriers, including the educational systems and economic systems, favour male candidates. Finally, culture and religion are important as well, because they shape attitudes which work against candidates, and often they restrict women's participation in the job market and public sphere to the 'traditional' place in the society.

2.4 Women vs. nature of a society (Hofstede model)

As Gwiazda (2017) writes, in communist states gender equality was declared (everyone worked for the benefit of the party and the country), and yet there were no women in senior political positions. This was a result of traditional gender roles, which is reflected in the masculinity index designed by G. Hofstede (2001). Thus, the issue of the presence of women in parliaments is also associated with the masculine nature of a given society (Dimitrov, 2014; Minkov, 2018). Of course, the question of masculinity should be approached more broadly, so one needs to take into account the generally understood culture of the place. This means that religion, values, perception of the future, attitude to authorities and power, and so on, are important and they shape the roles of men and women. It should be remembered that the Hofstede model is not perfect, because it was based on a white middle-class male study, and ignores e.g. non-cultural determinants and level of gender emancipation (Touburg, 2016; Minkov, 2018). The model is also criticized for the lack of presence of women in its creation, as if women did not create a national culture (Moulettes, 2007); however, the general assumptions were repeatedly verified and its usefulness has been confirmed (Gorodnichenko, Roland, 2011; Minkov, 2018). Hofstadter's study led to the extraction of a specific "cultural key" that was assigned to a given country. The factors identified in the model are individualism and collectivism, distance to power, avoiding uncertainty, and a tendency to adapt to the prevailing conditions.

2.5 Gender inequity consequences

It is often emphasized in literature that women constitute half of all societies, but their specific needs and rights are not reflected in politics and social decisions (Elomäki, 2015). One can even talk about societies that are oppressive towards women, where sexism constantly draws attention to the differences between men and women to the disadvantage of the latter (Brennan, 1988; Hughes, Paxton 2008; Wejnert, Rodriguez, 2015). Such an approach later results in differences in the socio-economic status of men and women (Simsek, 2014). Moreover, the socially accepted gender inequality might diminish women's access to employment, financial services, education, and health care, and of course also the access to higher managerial positions, including politics¹¹ (Kabeer, Natali, 2013; Polman,

2017). Therefore, gender inequity has many social and economic consequences, and of course, it is inefficient because it does not maximize productive capacity, but on the other hand - it does not allow equal opportunities to come true in life. According to Kabeer and Natali (2013), it results from the fact that when women are set aside of the salaried labour market, mediocre labour force quality will be lesser than if they are not, as more creative and hardworking female workers are kept from work in favour of less effective male employees. As a result, societies must deal with unused labour, worse economic development, and unfulfilled aspirations of people. These consequences also apply to the socio-political sphere.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data

Our intention was to explore all countries and territories forming Europe. Therefore, we collected the data for Albania, Andorra, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia (FYROM), Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Transnistria (Transnistrian Moldovan Republic), Turkey, Ukraine, and United Kingdom. In total, there are 51 countries and territories (Table 1), and the data reflecting the situation in parliaments are from 2019, while the data on economic situation are from 2018.

Data sources were as follows:

- 1) In case of GDP, data they were extracted from CIA World Factbook¹², and from OECD¹³.
- 2) Indicators regarding masculinity of societies were taken from Hofstede Insights¹⁴.
- 3) Data on countries' populations were retrieved from Population of the world and countries¹⁵.

- 4) Data on parliaments were extracted from PARLINE database on national parliaments¹⁶.

The possibility of making independent decisions and participating in political life has its reflection in parliaments, therefore the number of women in

the upper and lower houses can be an indicator of gender equality, as well as the general development of society, which refers to the Table 1.

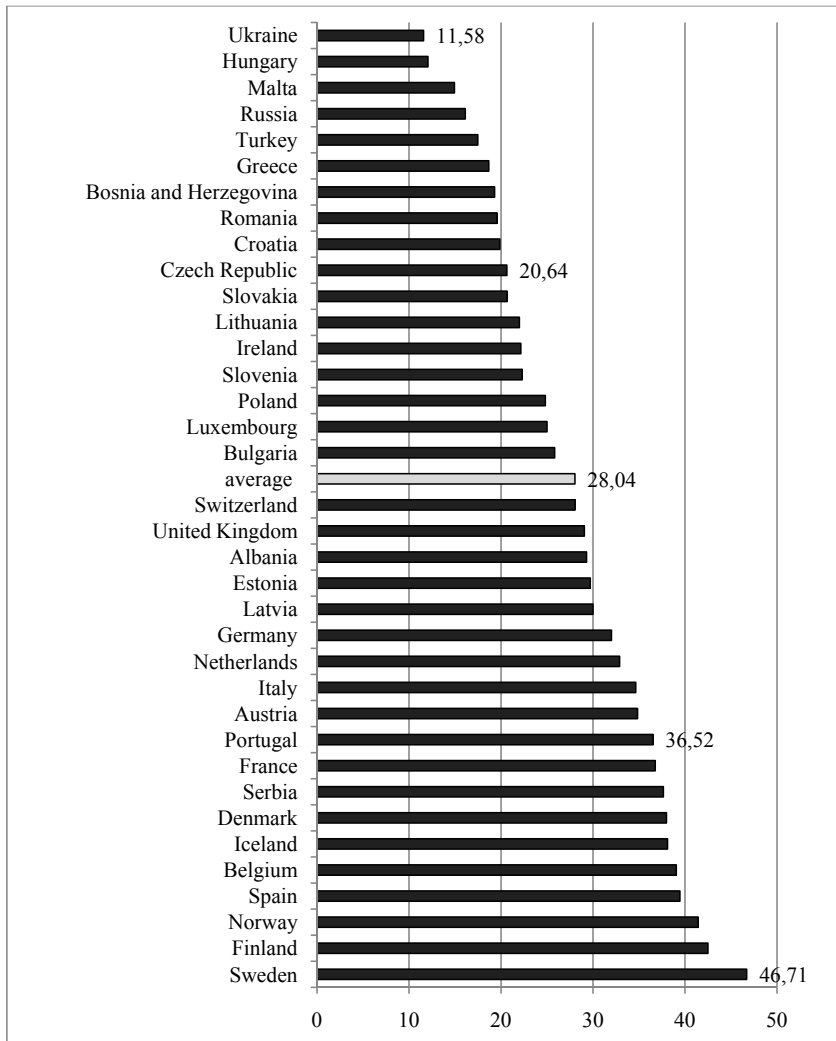
Table 1 The division of European countries according to the percentage of women in parliaments (n=51)

Countries – group under 20%	Share of women [in %]	Countries – group between 20 and 29.9%	Share of women [in %]	Countries – group between 30 and 39.9%	Share of women [in %]	Countries – group over 40%	Share of women [in %]
Transnistria	4.65	Czech Republic	20.64	Latvia	30	Norway	41.42
Ukraine	11.58	Slovakia	20.67	Kosovo	31.67	Finland	42.5
Hungary	12.06	Moldova	20.79	Germany	32.01	Sweden	46.71
Georgia	14.67	Lithuania	21.99	Netherlands	32.89		
Malta	14.93	Kazakhstan	22.08	Belarus	33.13		
Liechtenstein	16	Ireland	22.15	Italy	34.65		
Russia	16.12	Slovenia	22.31	Austria	34.84		
Azerbaijan	16.8	San Marino	23.33	Portugal	36.52		
Turkey	17.48	Montenegro	23.46	France	36.76		
Tur. Rep. of Cyprus	18	Poland	24.82	Serbia	37.65		
Gre. Rep. of Cyprus	17.86	Luxembourg	25	Andorra	37.93		
Greece	18.67	Bulgaria	25.83	Denmark	37.99		
Bosnia and Herzeg.	19.3	Switzerland	28.05	Iceland	38.1		
Romania	19.57	United Kingdom	29.06	N. Macedonia	38.33		
Croatia	19.87	Monaco	29.17	Belgium	39.05		
		Albania	29.29	Spain	39.45		
		Estonia	29.7				

Source: Own calculations based on PARLINE database on national parliaments, <http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/parli-research.asp> (Accessed on: April 20, 2019).

Unfortunately, not all information was accessible for all countries, which is why we had to remove from the final sample 16 countries for

which the masculinity index or GDP was not calculated. The final sample includes 36 countries (Fig. 1).

Figure 1 Women in the parliaments of selected European countries (in %; $n=36$)

Source: Own calculations based on PARLINE database on national parliaments, <http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/parline-research.asp> (Accessed on: April 20, 2019).

3.2 Research procedure

Firstly, using the official websites, we collected data about parliaments – in particular, data on the number of houses, total number of members, and number of women. It is significant that all European countries and the disputed territories have their own parliaments (there are no countries without parliamentary systems, with the exception of the Vatican City). The data on GDP and data about all Hofstede dimensions (power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty

avoidance, long-term orientation, and indulgence) were collected as well.

We conclude that despite numerous educational campaigns, political appeals, and changes in the law, in the parliaments of the European countries which deem themselves developed and providing equal opportunities, there are still fewer women than men. Determinants of such a situation could be discussed, but it seems that among the main ones are those mentioned earlier: the economic development and masculinity index. Therefore, we

propose the following hypotheses (the first is the main hypothesis and the second is auxiliary):

- 1) The presence of women in European parliaments is directly proportional to the economic development measured in GDP per capita; and
- 2) The number of women in parliaments depends also on the type of society measured by the masculinity index.

Masculinity index is determined on the basis of factors such as: people being ego-oriented, importance of money and things, living to work, high economic growth as a priority, solving conflicts with force, religion being the most important in life, men earning more than women, traditional family structures, failure in life being perceived as a catastrophe (Hofstede, 2001: 297). Thus, the index describes the mentality of society and its attitude towards the present and the past. We believe that apart from economic development, these are the key factors shaping the situation of women, and thus we assume that the lower the masculinity index in a given society, the higher the number of women in parliaments.

The level of development of a given country can, of course, be assessed by means of various indicators, such as unemployment, inflation, or investments, depending on the adopted priorities. One of such indicators is also the GDP, which provides answers to many important questions concerning economic activity (Jütting et al., 2006). Of course, this is by no means a perfect measure, as it does not reflect everything that happens in a country's economy, but it is widely used and therefore allows international comparisons (Saunders, Dalziel, 2017).

In order to assess the degree of gender equality in European parliaments, we collected data on all European countries, including those which are only partially located in Europe (Russia, Turkey) or are disputed territories (Transnistria). As previously mentioned, data were collected for 51 European countries and territories for which the participation of women in parliaments was calculated. In the analysis we included the following: percentage of women in national parliaments (PERWOMENPARLI); gross domestic product per capita (GDPC); masculinity dimension of the Hofstede cultural differences index (MASCULINITY), and we also used the Ordinarily Least Squares method (OLS) for statistical calculations. All data is for 2018.

The model we propose is as follows:

$$PERWOMENPARLI_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 LGDPC_i + \beta_2 MASCULINITY_i + u_i$$

where $i = 1, \dots, n$, denotes the country, PERWOMENPARLI refers to the percentage of women in national parliaments, LGDPC is the logarithm of Gross Domestic Product per capita, MASCULINITY is the masculinity dimension of the Hofstede cultural differences index. Finally, u_i represents the error term. The logarithm is used here to respond to skewness towards large values, i.e. a case in which one or a few values are much larger than the bulk of the data.

As a dependent variable, we calculated the percentage of women in national parliaments (lower and upper houses), marked as PERWOMENPARLI. The basic indicators calculated for the sample are shown in Table 2. Data for the sample were obtained from resources listed in Methodology part (3.1).

Table 2 Main statistical indicators calculated for the sample ($n=36$)

	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
PERWOMENPARLI	28.04	28.55	9.24	11.58	46.71
GDPC	39531.24	37092.45	19395.71	8800	107525.20
LGDPC	10.46	10.52	0.51	9.08	11.58
MASCULINITY	44.86	43.00	24.29	5.00	100.00

Variables: PERWOMENPARLI (percentage of women in national parliaments); GDPC (Gross Domestic Product per capita); LGDPC (logarithm of Gross Domestic Product per capita); MASCULINITY (masculinity dimension of the Hofstede cultural differences index).

Source: Own calculations based on CIA World Factbook¹⁷, OECD¹⁸, Hofstede Insights¹⁹ and PARLINE database on national parliaments²⁰ (all accessed on: April 20, 2019)

According to our assumptions, as a dependent variable we calculated the percentage of women in national parliaments (PERWOMENPARLI) for lower and upper houses. We also included two independent variables: the logarithm of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of each country (LGDP), and the masculinity dimension of the Hofstede cultural differences index (MASCULINITY). For statistical calculations, due to the fact that we only had one period of data (year 2018), the ordinary least squares (OLS) method was used to estimate regression.

Table 2 presents main statistical indicators of the sample ($n=36$), and, as we can see, the mean of women in parliaments is only 28.04%, which is far from the equality value of 50%. In fact, the maximum value observed in our sample is only 46.7%. Thus, in all the studied countries men constitute a majority in the parliaments. As regards the masculinity dimension, we observed a large variation with values from 5 to 100. This table also shows significant differences in the GDP per capita.

4. Results and discussion

In our considerations, we intend to establish the degree of implementation of the millennium goal concerning the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women. It is a very complex problem, which manifests itself differently in different countries. Therefore, we began with establishing the basic information and measures for the selected countries (Table 2). As mentioned above, for the detailed analysis and calculation, the countries with the calculated masculinity index have been selected, which is why their number has been reduced to 36. In Table 3, we calculated women's participation in parliaments, and included information on GDP per capita and Hofstede's masculinity index. For bicameral parliaments, the share of women in each chamber was calculated separately, and then the average of two values was

calculated. It should be noted here that the higher the PERWOMENPARLI variable (close to 100), the better; and the higher the LGDP variable, the better, while the lower MASCULINITY variable, the better (the country is more feminine). It can be noticed that the country with the largest representation of women in the parliament is Sweden. As it was mentioned before, Sweden is the most developed country in terms of gender equality, and it is also developed in terms of economic performance (it ranks 12th in Europe in terms of GDP). On the other side, there are countries like Ukraine, Hungary or Russia – former communist states, still struggling with problems and striving to improve their economic situation.

As far as the masculinity dimension is concerned, again Sweden has the best result with a low value of 5. Noticeable are also the good figures of Norway and Latvia. However, Slovakia presents the maximum masculinity dimension with a figure of 100, followed by Hungary and Albania. Also noteworthy are the surprisingly high masculinity indexes presented by Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Austria. In terms of GDP per capita, the richest country is Luxembourg, followed by Norway, Switzerland, and Ireland, while Ukraine is the poorest country, followed by the majority of the former Yugoslav states.

The calculations of women's participation in the parliaments of European countries presented in Table 3 show that the three countries with the highest participation of women are Scandinavian countries (Sweden: 46.71%, Finland: 42.5%, and Norway: 41.42%), where the GDP per capita is very high, while the masculinity index is very low (Sweden, Norway), or quite low (Finland). It is worth recalling that the average share of women in parliaments is 28.04% (as given in Table 2). This means that the two factors mentioned (GDP and masculinity index) can be of key importance here.

Table 3 Women in national parliaments, gross domestic product per capita and masculinity dimension of the Hofstede cultural differences index by country (n=36)

Country	PERWOMENPARLI	GDPC	MASCULINITY
Albania	29.29	12500.0	80
Austria	34.84	50000.0	79
Belgium	39.05	46600.0	54
Bosnia and Herzegovina	19.30	12800.0	54
Bulgaria	25.83	21800.0	40
Croatia	19.87	26261.7	40
Czech Republic	20.64	38021.5	57
Denmark	37.99	54337.4	16
Estonia	29.70	31700.0	30
Finland	42.50	44500.0	26
France	36.76	44100.0	43
Germany	32.01	52574.3	66
Greece	18.67	27800.0	57
Hungary	12.06	28798.6	88
Iceland	38.10	55322.1	10
Ireland	22.15	76889.3	68
Italy	34.65	38200.0	70
Latvia	30.00	28378.1	9
Lithuania	21.99	32400.0	19
Luxembourg	25.00	107525.0	50
Malta	14.93	41900.0	47
Netherlands	32.89	53900.0	14
Norway	41.42	62182.5	8
Poland	24.82	29574.0	64
Portugal	36.52	30500.0	31
Romania	19.57	24600.0	42
Russia	16.12	27900.0	36
Serbia	37.65	15100.0	43
Slovakia	20.67	32376.2	100
Slovenia	22.31	36163.4	19
Spain	39.45	38400.0	42
Sweden	46.71	51404.8	5
Switzerland	28.05	66299.6	70
Turkey	17.48	28606.9	45
Ukraine	11.58	8800.0	27
United Kingdom	29.06	44909.1	66

Variables: PERWOMENPARLI (percentage of women on national parliaments); GDPC (gross domestic product per capita); MASCULINITY (masculinity dimension of the Hofstede cultural differences index).

Source: Own calculations based on CIA World Factbook²¹, OECD²², Hofstede Insights²³ and PARLINE database on national parliaments²⁴ (all accessed on: April 20, 2019)

Calculations also show that in terms of GDP per capita Luxembourg (over USD 107,500), Ireland (76,889.3) and Switzerland (66,299.6) have the highest level, while in these countries women's participation in parliaments is quite average (22-28%). This is due to the high masculinity index, which is around 50-70. The countries with the lowest rates of women in parliaments are Ukraine, Hungary, and Malta. Ukraine has a low masculinity index (27), but it also has a very low GDP per capita, so it seems that the weak economic level has influenced the role of women in politics and society, because this country has the lowest number of women in parliament (11.58%). This is confirmed by the statistical calculations presented in Table 4.

Table 4 OLS regression of LGDPC and MASCULINITY on PERWOMENPARLI

Variables	Model
LGDPC	6.829*** (2.52)
MASCULINITY	-0.124** (-2.15)
CONSTANT	-37.865 (-1.32)
F statistic	5.91***
Adjusted R Squared	0.219

Notes. (*) and (**) indicate significance levels of 5%, and 1%, respectively. T statistic in brackets.

Variables: PERWOMENPARLI (percentage of women on national parliaments); LGDPC (logarithm of Gross Domestic Product per capita); MASCULINITY (masculinity dimension of the Hofstede cultural differences index).

Source: Own calculations based on data in Table 3.

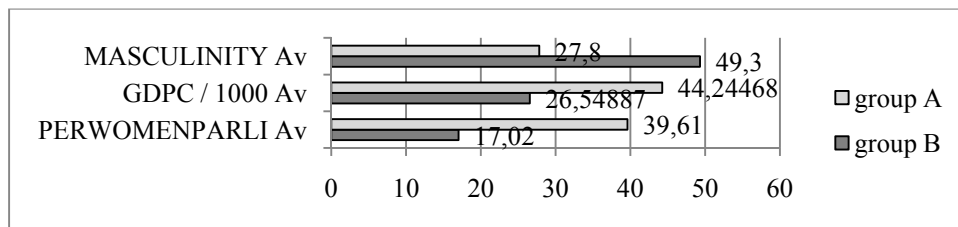
In Table 4, instead, we are searching for the relationship between GDP and the number of women in parliament, and the calculations show that such a dependency does exist (and is statistically significant). As we can see, the beta coefficient presents a value of 6.8 and it is significant at 99% level. We observed that European countries with a higher GDP per capita have more women in their parliaments. This finding confirms that gender equality is higher in more economically developed countries and it is in line with the arguments of Blair (2012), and Panda (2018). We have thus proven that there is a positive correlation between the number of women in parliament and GDP, and a negative correlation between the number of women and the masculinity index.

As the main contribution of our paper we perceive the evidence that throughout Europe, the level of social and political activity of women is associated with economic development, however, we realize that this is not the only factor. Thus, we have also proven that countries with lower masculinity dimension have more female representatives in national parliaments. In fact, we obtained a beta coefficient of -0.124 and the relationship is significant at 95% level. This finding is important because, as we demonstrate, lower masculinity dimension helps to improve the gender equality politics, but also "the dominant values in a masculine society are achievement and success; the dominant values in a feminine society are caring for others and quality of life" (De Mooij, Hofstede, 2001: 89). This argument assumes that countries with more women in top positions can create better conditions for living, which means better development in the future.

One can, of course, wonder if other factors are (ir) relevant, such as the way parliamentary elections are conducted and the existence of gender quotas. However, among the top ten countries in Table 2 (Sweden, Finland, Norway, Spain, Belgium, Iceland, Denmark, Serbia, France, and Portugal) there is no one dominant political solution. Electoral parity for women is in force in France and Belgium (constitutional), and in Spain and Portugal (statutory). The internal party regulations were applied in Sweden, while in the other five countries there are no formal regulations in this area (Gorzelay-Plesinska, 2011; Lu, 2016). Thus, we can say that political solutions are not a key determinant. However, it seems that the significance of two factors can certainly be demonstrated: prosperity measured by GDP per capita, and cultural specificity measured by the society's masculinity/femininity index, while the role of gender quotas introduced by law is not fully evidenced. Poland can serve as an example. In 2011, gender quotas were introduced while preparing electoral lists. In the elections of 2011 and 2015 more women did indeed appear on the lists, but the number of women elected to the parliament or performing important political function did not increase (Millard, 2014; Gwiazda, 2017). This means that the mere presence of women on electoral lists does not guarantee their election.

Figure 2 shows differences between two groups of countries: group A comprises 10 European countries with the largest number of women in parliament (39.61 on average), while group B comprises 10 countries with the smallest number of women (17.02 on average).

Figure 2 Differences between countries with the largest (A) and smallest (B) number of women in parliaments



Notes. Variables: MASCULINITY Av (average masculinity dimension of the Hofstede cultural differences index); GDPC/1000 Av (average Gross Domestic Product per capita divided by 1000); PERWOMENPARLI Av (average percentage of women in national parliaments).

Source: Own calculations.

It can be concluded that larger numbers of women in parliaments are accompanied by a higher GDP index and a lower masculinity index, while the low numbers of women in parliaments are accompanied by a low GDP and a high masculinity index. This means that the achievement of the new Sustainable Development Goals, in particular the situation of women, is not only dependent on the good will of politicians or promotional campaigns for gender equality, but also on the development of the economy, and the values of societies (Booth et al., 2003). Obviously, changes in both those areas require time.

In the following paragraphs, the considerations pertain to all of Europe, i.e. countries that are sometimes ignored in literature on Europe, such as Turkey, Georgia, or the Balkan states remaining outside the EU. Although Turkey has GDPC at the level of USD 28,606, it is still much lower than the European average (USD 39,531); it also has an above-average masculinity index (45), therefore the share of women in the Turkish parliament is low (17.48%). Unfortunately, not all countries have calculated Hofstede indexes, which limited the possibility of precise calculations for all the countries of Europe. Among them is Georgia, whose society is nonetheless similar to those of other post-communist states such as Ukraine or Poland (Tkeshelashvili, 2009); it can thus be assumed that Georgia will have a high masculinity index, which, along with low GDPC (USD 10,700) explains the very low share of women in the country's unicameral parliament (14.67%).

Among the Balkan states, the situation is diversified. Significant progress has been noted in North Macedonia, Kosovo, and Serbia, where gender quotas were introduced for the political representation of women. For instance, in Serbia, where GDPC is only USD 15,100, the parliament consists of 37.65% of women (with the average for Europe being 28.04%). This can be explained by the fact that in 2006 the quotas for women's participation were put in the Serbian constitution and in the adopted electoral law, in accordance with which every third candidate on the list for the parliament had to be a person of the underrepresented gender (Lendák-Kabók, 2013). In addition, Serbia has applied for membership in the EU, and so it has to meet various requirements, among them those related to gender equality. Thus, similar to France or Belgium, women have access to parliament guaranteed by the Basic Law. Other Balkan countries, such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, also tackled the issues of gender equality. In those countries, the share of women in parliaments is 29.3%, 19.3%, and 23.5% respectively, so it is higher than in Ukraine (11.58%), Hungary (12.06%), Turkey (17.48%), and even Greece (18.67%). Analysing the changes occurring in the Balkan countries, what should be emphasized are the law reforms and adjustments to the requirements of the EU.

Next to the most essential data, we have also collected information on the sex ratios and unemployment levels in each country. We wanted to verify whether women really do constitute half of each population and whether it was an important factor

determining the number of women in parliaments. It turns out that the average sex ratio in European countries is 50.95% of women to 49.05% of men. Andorra (41.59%), Cyprus (47.4% and 48.91%) and Kosovo (48.5%) have the smallest proportion of women. In Estonia, Belarus, Lithuania, Ukraine, Transnistria, and Latvia, women constitute over 53% of the population. However, there is no statistically significant correlation between the number of women in a given country and the number of women in the country's parliament. There is also no relation between the number of women in parliaments and unemployment. Therefore, it seems that what can be certainly proven is the relationship between the number of women in the parliament and the level of GDP together with the masculinity index.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

As it was mentioned in the beginning, in 2019, Europe celebrated the centenary of women's rights in politics. At the beginning, it was a matter of rights themselves, but since the 1950s, the issue of women's participation in public life has become more prominent. This is evident in the declarations of international organizations and the European Union on social and political priorities.

The analysis of data collected for 51 European countries prove that although women constitute 50% of the population, their participation in public life remains small. Our calculations allow us to state that the participation of women in European parliaments is still low and on average it is 28.04%. Only three countries achieved a level above 40% (Sweden, Finland, and Norway). No European country reached the index of 50%. As many as 15 out of 51 parliaments in Europe (29.41%) have a female participation rate below 20%. Determining clear reasons for this can be difficult, because societies are very different, however, two measures of a universal nature can be used here: GDP per capita and masculinity index. So, the aim of this article was to determine the participation of women in European

parliaments and to verify two hypotheses, namely: 1) the presence of women in European parliaments is directly proportional to the economic development measured by GDP per capita; and 2) the lower the masculinity index in a given society, the higher the number of women in parliaments.

The presented calculations confirm our hypotheses that the participation of women in parliaments depends on the economic level of the country and on the "masculinity" of society. Changes in both these areas are difficult and require time, so quick transformations should not be expected. Certainly, an appropriate information policy and the introduction of legal regulations defining a specific level of women's presence in politics (for example, the existence of gender quotas) may also be of some importance, but the research to date does not prove a close relationship. It should be added that our calculations did not show any relationship between the total number of women in the country and the number of women in the parliaments, nor is the latter related to factors such as rate of unemployment.

Undeniably, the number of women in parliaments is a result of numerous conditions. In addition to economic factors, the political system should be mentioned here, including the constitution containing a non-discrimination clause covering gender. There are also other considerations involved such as the dominant religion (or lack thereof), ethnic structure of society, activity of non-governmental organizations, and electoral regulations, i.e. the method of electing representatives to parliaments and the existence of gender quotas. It can be assumed as well that other factors play some role too, for example, the level of internationalization of the economy, which brings different gender perceptions; however, this also seems to be related to the economic development. The above issues can be the subject of further research, however today it can be stated that the richer the country, the more women in parliaments, and the lower the masculinity index, again the more women in parliaments.

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Joanna Hernik

Antonio Minguez Vera

RODNA RAVNOPRAVNOST U PARLAMENTIMA – KAKVO JE STANJE U EUROPI? RAZMATRANJA SA STANOVIŠTA GOSPODARSKOG RAZVOJA I INDEKSA MASKULINITETA DRUŠTVA

SAŽETAK

U literaturi se često naglašava kako žene čine polovinu svih društava, ali se njihove potrebe i prava ne uzimaju uvijek u obzir u odlukama koje ta društva donose. Ujedinjeni narodi i druga međunarodna tijela trude se promijeniti položaj žena na svjetskoj razini putem različitih programa kao što su „Milenijski razvojni ciljevi“ i trenutačni „Ciljevi održivog razvoja“. Promicanje rodne ravnopravnosti i osnaživanje žena ubrajaju se u te ciljeve. Autori koji se bave rodnom i razvojnim pitanjima često ističu kako su žene nedovoljno iskorišten čimbenik gospodarskog rasta. U ovome radu želimo situaciju sagledati iz druge perspektive i istražiti kako je aktivnost žena uvjetovana gospodarskim razvojem određene zemlje. Stoga je ovaj rad dijagnoza trenutnog stanja, ali i traženje objašnjenja za neke međuovisnosti.

Razlozi za prisutnost ili odsutnost žena u politici nisu sasvim jasni; stoga će se ispitati glavne odrednice koje po mišljenju autora na to utječu, a to su bogatstvo društva i njegov karakter (maskulinitet ili feminitet). Cilj je rada analizirati sudjelovanje žena u parlamentima europskih zemalja i provjeriti hipotezu je li postotak žena u parlamentu izravno proporcionalan gospodarskom razvoju izraženom kao BDP po stanovniku. Osim glavne hipoteze ispituje se i pomoćna hipoteza koja se odnosi na maskulinitet društva (Hofstedeov model).

Na temelju analize može se zaključiti da je sudjelovanje žena u europskim parlamentima i dalje nisko (u prosjeku 28,04%), a nijedna europska zemlja nije došla do 50%. Potvrđena je statistička značajnost obje hipoteze te se može ustvrditi da sudjelovanje žena u europskim parlamentima ovisi o gospodarskom razvoju određene zemlje i vrsti društva. Jasno je da je te odrednice teško promijeniti, odnosno da su promjene relativno spore (iako je zamjetan rastući trend), te da imaju specifične uzroke. Nije utvrđen odnos između broja žena u parlamentima i drugih gospodarskih čimbenika, npr. nezaposlenosti.

Ključne riječi: Europa, gospodarski razvoj, rodna ravnopravnost, Hofstedeov indeks, parlamentarni izbori, ciljevi održivog razvoja